

Amendments to the Claims

This "Listing of Claims" replaces all prior versions of claims in the subject application:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the recovery of an organic acid from a fermentation broth comprising the steps of:

(a) conducting a fermentation with an organic acid producing microorganism to produce a fermentation broth containing said organic acid and insolubles comprising all microbial biomass resulting from said fermentation with said microorganism;

(b) drying said fermentation broth to obtain a dried product containing said organic acid and said insolubles comprising said microbial biomass, wherein said drying occurs without prior removal of any of said insolubles comprising said microbial biomass from said fermentation broth;

(c) adding said organic acid-containing dried product of step (b) to a lower alcohol in the presence of a strong acid to obtain a solution containing said insolubles; and

(d) removing said insolubles comprising said microbial biomass to obtain a solution comprising said organic acid.

2-4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein in step (c) the concentration of said organic acid added to said lower alcohol is from about 50 g/L to about 100 g/L.

6. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein in step (b) drying comprises spray drying said fermentation broth.

7. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein in step (c) the ~~reaction~~ temperature is from about 25° C to about 60° C.

9. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein in step (c) about 1.2 equivalents of said strong acid is present.

10. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein in step (c) said lower alcohol is selected from the group consisting of methanol, ethanol, propanol, butanol and glycol.

11. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein in step (c) said strong acid is selected from the group consisting of sulphuric acid, nitric acid, hydrobromic acid, hydrochloric acid and phosphoric acid.

12. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 11, wherein in step (c) said acid is sulphuric acid.

13. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, wherein in step (d) removing insolubles comprises filtration.

14. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein said organic acid comprises lactic acid, 2-keto-L-gulonic acid, citric acid or gluconic acid.

15. (Original) The process of claim 14, wherein said organic acid is 2-keto-L-gulonic acid.

16. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 1, further comprising esterifying said organic acid of step (d) to the corresponding ester.

17. (Currently Amended) A process for the recovery of an organic acid from a fermentation broth comprising the steps of:

(a) conducting a fermentation with an organic acid producing microorganism to produce a fermentation broth containing said organic acid and insolubles comprising all microbial biomass resulting from said fermentation with said microorganism;

(b) drying said fermentation broth to obtain a dried product containing said organic acid and said insolubles comprising the microbial biomass, wherein said drying occurs without prior removal of insolubles comprising said microbial biomass from said fermentation broth and said dried product contains all of the microbial biomass;

(c) adding said organic acid-containing dried product of step (b) to a lower alcohol to obtain an alcoholic suspension;

(d) adding a strong acid to said alcoholic suspension of step (c); and

(e) removing the insolubles to obtain an organic acid.

21. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 17, wherein in step (c) the concentration of said organic acid added to said lower alcohol is from about 50 g/L to about 100 g/L.

22. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 17, wherein in step (b) drying comprises spray drying said fermentation broth.

23. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 17, wherein in steps (c) and (d) the temperature is from about 25° C to about 60° C.

24. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 17, wherein in step (c) said lower alcohol is selected from the group consisting of methanol, ethanol, propanol, butanol and glycol.

25. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 17, wherein in step (d) about 1.2 equivalents of strong acid is added.

26. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 17, wherein in step (d) said strong acid is selected from the group consisting of sulphuric acid, nitric acid, hydrobromic acid, hydrochloric acid and phosphoric acid.

27. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 26, wherein in step (d) said acid is sulphuric acid.

28. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 17, wherein in step (e) removing insolubles comprises filtration.

29. (Original) The process of claim 17, wherein said organic acid comprises lactic acid, 2-keto-L-gulonic acid, citric acid or gluconic acid.

30. (Original) The process of claim 29, wherein said organic acid is 2-keto-L-gulonic acid.

31. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 17, further comprising esterifying said organic acid of step (e) to the corresponding ester.